

**WASHINGTON, DC** – U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan (FL-13), the author of federal legislation to crack down on illegal “pill mills,” today lauded Florida’s implementation of a statewide prescription drug tracking database. Under the new law, any health care professional who dispenses a controlled substance must report the information to the database within seven days.

“Today, Florida takes an important step toward combating the prescription drug epidemic that claims seven lives a day in our state,” said Buchanan. “The days of doctor shopping and over-prescribing must come to an end. Now, more than ever, we need to shut down these “pill mills” that bring untold misery to our children, our families, and our communities.”

Buchanan’s federal legislation, “The Pill Mill Crackdown Act,” is supported by more than 50 bipartisan members of Congress and key law enforcement groups. It includes provisions to: reclassify hydrocodone combination drugs (one of the most addictive drug mixtures) to a Schedule II drug; support state-based prescription drug monitoring programs; use the money from seized illicit operations for drug treatment; and toughen prison terms and fines for pill mill operators.

“Many of these so-called pain clinics are nothing more than drug dealers posing as doctors and health providers,” said Buchanan. “They need to be dealt with swiftly and firmly – and those who are making money off the death and suffering of their victims should be sent to prison.”